Plain Words
OF
INSTRUCTION

Given forth as moved of the Lord, for all people, whose minds and hearts are inclinable after the way of peace and rest with the Lord, which the Leaders of the people in this age have caused them to erre from, and have forgotten their resting place.

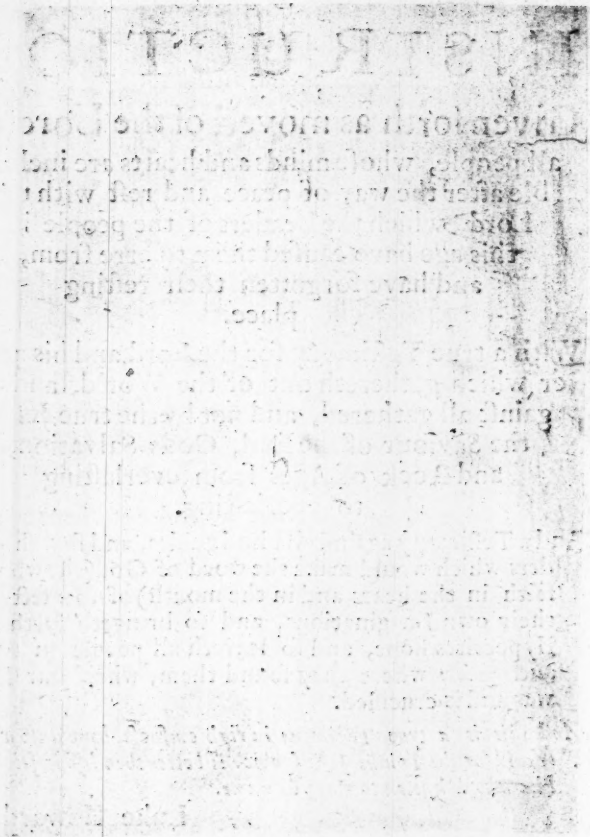
With a true Testimony for the Lord and his power which gathereth out of the World, and against all gathered, and not by the true Jesus the Saviour of the soul, Gods Salvation, and Rock of Ages from everlasting to everlasting.

And a Testimony against all blind guides, and foolish builders which would make the word of God (the word of faith in the heart and in the mouth) of no effect, by their own Imaginations, and so bringeth forth the Hypocrites hope, and so leaveth all people in *Egypt* and *Sodom* where they found them, where our Lord was and is crucified.

And this is a true Testimony in righteousness, born unto all the World for the Truths sake (which is better then life it self) by him who is known to many by name.

Luke Howard.

LONDON, Printed for *Thomas Simmons*, at the Bull and Mouth neer *Aldersgate*, 1658.



ON the eleventh day of the third Moneth, 1658. as I ſtood at my labour in my outward calling, with my mind ſtaid on the Lord, and my thoughts exerciſed in his Law which is light, the ſtate and condition of the deceived, and the deceiving Preachers of theſe times, came into my mind, and their unrighteouſneſs was laid before me, (as it had been many a time before) by which the people have been and are deceived, and periſheth for want of knowledge, ſo I was moved of Lord in the clear ſpirit of truth, to propound theſe queries for the ſeed ſake, which is kept in bondage in all people, which are led by ſuch blind guides, to the making manifeſt ſome part of their unclean ſpirit, which ruleth in them, and in all people which are lead by them; which liveth out of the Truth, the which truth maketh free all which liveth in it; and therefore is their anger kindled againſt all which are made free by it, becauſe they are in bondage to the ſpirit of this world, and ſo have a life in another thing then in the truth of the Lord God who made the World and all things therein, which dwelleth not in Temples made with hands, neither is he worſhipped by mens hands, ſeeing he giveth life and breath unto all, for that end alone that all ſhould live unto him, and praiſe his great and glorious Name, which is known over all, as all ſtand in the Covenant of life and light with him in which they were created; And ſeeing that this God is very much profeſſed, and little known, and leſſe worſhiped in the ſpirit and in the truth, although there be ſo many worſhippers of him in words of all ſorts, they all worſhipping they know not what, being out of the Covenant wherein they were created, even of the light wherein the true knowledge and worſhip of God ſtandeth; and therefore as one which hath obtained mercy, and by it brought into Covenant again, do I propound theſe Queries in love unto all to conſider of, and let the witneſſe of God in all conſciences anſwer.

Quere. 1. WHether God be not all light, and in him is no darkneſs at all? And whether this were not and be not the meſſage which the Saints and Miniſters of Chriſt were and are now to preach according to the Scriptures?

Quere 2. Whether Jeſus Chriſt be not the light of the World, and hath not enlightened every one which cometh into the World? And whether all which believeth in his light ſhall not come out of darkneſs, and feel and witneſs the light of light according to the Scriptures?

Quere 3. Whether God and Chriſt in the light be not one according to the Scriptures? And although many may, and do ſay ſo, becauſe it is left on Record by the ſpirit of Truth which dwelt in the Children of light, yet whether any can come unto the true knowledge of it, but by the miſtery of faith held in a pure concience? And whether all men be not without that faith by nature, and whether any can come unto that faith untill they believe in the light which ſhineth in the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, which is eternal life, as it is abided in, according to the Scripture?

Quere 4. Whether Chriſt Jeſus, the Covenant of Light, doth not proceed from the Father and God of Light as a free gift of grace unto man, ſhining in his heart to make manifeſt with the Spirit of Truth the thoughts and intents of the heart, for to keep man from the committing of actions which are evil, which are firſt committed in the thoughts of the heart where the alienation ſtands? And whether this be not the condemnation of all which are condemned, that they turn from the Covenant of God, and do not ſet to their ſeales by believing in it the Covenant of light? And whether this the Covenant of light be not the way of God for all to meet him in, and to work righteouſneſs in, by caſting off the workes and deeds of darkneſſe,

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which by the light in the heart are made manifeſt? And whether all which doth joyn unto the light by believing in it, doth not joyne unto God in Chriſt Jeſus in the new Covenant which God maketh with his people, which is written in the heart, and put into the inward parts, wherein the light ſhineth according to the Scripture?

Quere 5 And whether all unrighteouſneſſe be not ſin, and whether he which committeth ſin be not of the Devil? and whether he which loveth ſo to do be not brought forth into the image of the Devil? and whether any which will not caſt off what by the light is made manifeſt to be evil, doth not love their ſins, and hate the light, and ſo joyning unto the evil, ſhut themſelves out of Covenant with God in the light, and ſo remaineth in the Covenant of death and darkneſſe, and ſo under the bond of iniquity? And whether any which therein ſtand be fit to preach unto others the way of God, which is life and light, and if any do preſume to uſe their tongues to preach to others in that ſtate, then whether all ſuch be not hypocrites and vain talkers, intruding into ſuch things as they never ſaw from the Lord in the Covenant of light, but have learned it by nature and tradition, and ſo are vainly puft up in their fleſhly mindes? and whether they are not thoſe who ſhall never profit the people at all, they having gotten as it were a form of Godlineſſe, but denying the power thereof (which ſtandeth in the Covenant of light?) and whether all people which have been followers of ſuch be not to turn away from them and to turn to Chriſt Jeſus, Gods Covenant of light, which he hath freely given as a free gift of grace unto all men that will receive him to be their teacher, and to learn of him alone according to the Scripture?

Quere 6. And whether all which love and live in ſin and unrighteouſneſſe, and yet will preſume to preach the words of righteouſneſſe recorded in the Scripture of truth, be not ſuch as ſteal the words now, as the falſe Prophets did whom the Lord was againſt? And whether

the Lord be not againſt them now as ever he was? and whether they be not ſuch as run when the Lord never ſent them, and ſo ſhall never profit the people at all, no more then they did? And whether all ſuch Preachers may not as well be known now, as in the days paſt, by their fruits? for can we gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles now any more than they could then? and may we not know them now by their fruits as they did then, which preacht for filthy lucres ſake, and through feigned words and covetous practiſes makes merchandiſe of the people, every one looking for his gain from his quarter, that ſo he may feed himſelf with the fat, and cloath himſelf with the wool? but he ſtarveth the flock; and if any for conſcience ſake cannot put into their mouths, they even prepare war againſt them now as they did then; and of this ſort are all ſuch preachers as rebell againſt the light, as the prophets Teſtimony of them is? And are we any more to uphold them now then the children of light were then? or are we not to bear our publick Teſtimony againſt them now as they did then, according to the whole current of Scripture?

Quere 7. Whether all which liveth in the practiſe of that horrible and filthy thing which was committed in the Land of *Iſrael* as it is now in the land of *England*, to the far exceeding of them, as the Prieſt preaching for hire, and the Prophets prophecying for money (and the peoples loving to have it ſo) be not as much now to be witneſſed againſt, as it was then? And whether it be not as great an evil, and as much to be taken notice of by our God now as it was then, for his Witneſſes to be evilly entreated now as they were then, to the great ſhame of the name of a Chriſtian, who hath ſtole the name, and loſt the nature, and ſo bringeth forth contrary fruit, even ſuch as the Lord will repay with vengeance, according to the words of his Son Jeſus Chriſt the ſame yeſterday as to day and for ever, the Rock of Ages, and foundation of all truth, according to the Scripture?

Quere 8. And whether all which live in ſin and love

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ſo to do, which can run from Town to Town, and from Pariſh to Pariſh, and from Ship to Ship for gifts and rewards, and ſo preach as to get the peoples money by flattery, and daubing of them up with untempered morter, in telling them they are that which the witneſſe of God in their conſciences telleth them they are not, and if they cannot ſo have the wages of unrighteouſneſſe (the peoples money) then they will take it by the force of a carnal pretended Law, which is without all grounds for it, but any way to have it will ſerve their turn? Whether all ſuch be not Rebels againſt the power of the Lord Jeſus, and againſt the Covenant of God, wherein the ſure mercies of *David* are injoyed, and the glory of *Iſrael* is witneſſed, even the free covenant of light, in which the true Prophets did and doth ſtand, which as a light unto the feet, and a lanthorn unto the pathes it compaſſeth the minds of all the Children of light, and ſo guideth them out from under the teachings of all ſuch evil-minded men and ſeducers, for they wax worſe and worſe through covetouſneſſe, ſo the one he buildeth up a wall, and the other he daubeth it with untempered morter, and ſo they keep up that alive which ſhould be put to death, and put to death that which ſhould be kept alive, and as the falſe Prophets ever did, whoſe damnation ſlumbereth not according to the Scripture?

Quere 9. Whether all which live in ſin, and love ſo to do, and yet will preſume to uſe their tongues to preach to others from the words of the Scriptures of truth, be not now as great theeves as the falſe Prophets of old were, who ſtole the true Prophets words, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the Lord, when the Lord never ſpoke unto them, and though they ſpoke true words, yet they could not profit the people, becauſe they ſtole them, and did not ſpeak from the ſpirit of truth, the life of righteouſneſſe made manifeſt in them, and ſo although they did ſwear the Lord liveth, which was true words, yet they ſwore falſely, and how can that ſpirit now ſpeak Truth, which could then ſpeak nothing but falſehood,

hood, although they did ſpeak true words, for now for a man which liveth in ſin, and loveth it, for him to preach to another of the true Miniſters lives recorded in the Scriptures, becauſe they lived according to their words, which are true words, that doth not make him righteous, neither doth his words reach to the witneſſe of God which is righteous in every mans conſcience which heareth him, and ſo none are able to learn righteouſneſſe by him, becauſe that ſpirit is head in him, and ſpeaketh the words which hath a life in ſin and unrighteouſneſſe, as covetouſneſſe, pride, and what not? for from one root doth all ſin proceed, and ſo the blind leadeth the blinde, and all muſt needs fall into the ditch, according to the Scripture?

Quere 10. And ſo whether that which is given unto every man to profit withall, and to lead man out of ſin up to God, be not by them murdered, and that which the Devil hath begotten in man, which is the ſeed of the Serpent, whoſe life is in ſin(and therefore wil plead for it) be not by them nouriſhed and kept alive, and this is juſt contrary the one unto the other, and unto the promiſes of God unto man, that the ſeed of the woman ſhall break the head of the Serpent, and this was and is all that ever the righteous Miniſters of God ever travelled and laboured for, to bring forth the ſeed of the Woman, whoſe name is called the Word of God, to rule in the heart, by which the creature was and is made able to do the will of God; and here was and is the bleſſing of the promiſes felt as this birth is felt, but the Devil who was the murderer from the beginning of this birth, and abode not in the truth which is the light, and in all which are from the Covenant of light doth he rule, and labour to carry on his old work to keep people from believing in the light, the Covenant of God, wherein the ability ſtandeth, and is received to deſtroy and overcome the power of hell and death which is his Kingdom, ſo can all the Children of light truly

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ſay, greater is he which is in us, then he which is in the World, according to the Scripture ?

And thus have I in love unto the ſeed of God in all propounded theſe few Queries, to the opening of the opening of the underſtanding of all, which have not fully made ſhipwrack of faith and a good conſcience, but feeleth ſomething yet left which hungereth and thirſteth after righteouſneſſe, and unto it it the bleſſing is, which will not be, nor cannot be ſatisfied with the talk of the thing, but muſt have the thing it ſelf, which is the ſubſtance, or elſe it dieth, which all which are covered with the ſhadow of, are willing to ſet to their ſhoulders by words and actions to perſecute, but if in a blind zeal they kill the body, and think they do God good ſervice in ſo doing, that will not excuſe them, but they fulfill the Scripture to their own deſtruction, for the ſervant is not greater then his Maſter, and our reward is with Him, in whom I reſt, in my meaſure, a friend unto all, and known unto the Lord in it and to the ſons of men, by my name, as to man,

Luke Howard.

AND now a few words unto all you which call your ſelves Churches gathered out of the World, I matter not your names of diſtinction, for that cover will not not hide you, the nature and ground being ſtanding which is all one, and with the light of Chriſt Jeſus you are ſeen and made manifeſt, and unto the meaſure of the ſame light in you all (in whom it is not yet put out) I ſpeak and write theſe lines for you to conſider of, Whether you be gathered out of the World, yea or nay ? or by what ſpirit or power you are gathered together ? for this know, that it is not ſufficient for you to gather in a heap together, and call your ſelves by the name of

the Church of Christ, and yet the fruits of the Spirit of Christ not to be found among you, but that ground ſtanding which bringeth forth briers and thorns, both in you and your Leaders, and all ſuch fruit is but for the fire and the wrath of the Lord, and therefore for you to pretend to practiſe ſuch things, as the Saints in the dayes paſt did practiſe, by the leadings of the ſpirit of life which dwelt in them, and ſo left them on record for the learning of all which are lead by the ſame ſpirit which can read them and underſtand them, according as they live in the fulfilling of them, for they were the Sons of God by faith in Chriſt Jeſus, and as many as are led by the ſame Spirit of God they are the Sons of God now and none elſe, and therefore conſider whether the pure Spirit of the Lord have led you to gather together, or your own ſpirits, the which yet hath fellowſhip with the World, and can joyn thereto, and love the things thereof, and this is a true Teſtimony that the love of the Father is not in ſuch, neither are they called out of the World.

It is true, there was a cry once in the hearts of many of you after righteouſneſſe, and there was in your hearts and mindes an inclining to ſatisfie it, and that which cried after righteouſneſſe was the righteous ſpirit and ſeed of God, and the manifeſtation of it was given unto you for to profit withall, which cry was againſt unrighteouſneſſe, for to have been ſeparated indeed from under the burthen of it, which did oppreſſe it as a Cart is oppreſſed with ſheaves, that ſo it might have enjoyed its freedom, with the Lord in righteouſneſſe which is its life; but now conſider whether you have profited in this, which was given unto you to profit withall, or whether you have not profited and increaſed in your own ſpirit, and ſo have this murdered, and by your ſelf-ſeparation are grown harder and harder in ſin and iniquity, and ſo through the ſtrength and ſubtilty thereof have learned how to live in it and to cover it over, and to plead for it, but wo be to him which covereth his ſin and hideth

deth his tranſgreſſion, for he ſhall not proſper, for the hand of the Lord will ſearch out the hidden things of *Eſau*; for now conſider this in the fear of the Lord, that that which in the dayes paſt bore witneſſe againſt ſin, and cryed after righteouſneſſe hath not now changed its nature to become willing to live in ſin, although its voyce may not be ſo much heard as in the dayes paſt, becauſe the earth is grown thicker over it then it was, yet that which was humble in you and then called for humility and wrought ſome tenderneſſe in you is the ſame ſtill as its hearkened unto, and is not now become proud, but beareth witneſſe againſt it ſtill as its ſuffered to ſpeak in you, and that which was righteous and wrought in you ſome tendernes in the days paſt, and cryed after righteouſnes that it might have had a free life from under the bond of iniquitie, hath not now changed his nature to become unrighteous to live in covetouſneſſe and pride, and according to the courſe of this world, to ſerve the times as oft as they do change, and to ſeek the honour and glory and profit of this world and to joyn thereto, but that ſpirit which can do theſe things is that which hath murdered this juſt one and ſlain the Lamb of God, now as ever it hath done, from the foundation of the world, and here read your ſelves all you time-ſerving Profeſſors; And therefore as you prize your eternal peace conſider of your latter end before it be too late when time ſhall be no more, for then ſuch fruits will be bitter unto you, therefore whilſt you have time prize it and anſwer the requirings of the ſpirit of the Lord by obeying of it, and rebel not againſt it when theſe things are made manifeſt by it, and ſell not your birth-right therein for vain and unprofitable things which in the day of the Lord you will be aſhamed of.

For this honeſtly conſider of, whether a fooliſh cuſtom of words or practiſes in action or faſhions of apparel which riſeth out of the carnal heart, be not vain and unprofitable, although the heart may be ſo much drawn

into the thing, that the eye can scarce see or look, or the ear hear, but the spirit lusteth after all it seeth or heareth and whether the living therein be not rebelling against the light, which sometimes checketh in secret for them, and whether Rebellion against that that checketh, be not as the sin of witch-craft, which maketh the heart harder and harder, and so much the harder, because you are covered with a profession of the Saints life, which you are out of, and so are in the liberty of the flesh; but wo be to him that covereth his sin, for he shall not prosper; therefore to the light which maketh all things in the heart manifest incline your ear, and hear, that your soules may live, and to it bow, and in it wait, that you may be compassed about therewith, and feel the righteous power of life which in it is made manifest, the tongue to bridle, and the whole man to govern, or else your profession is all in vain, and it is cursed, as is your pride and all unrighteousnesse; for now for a proud and covetous man in his proud and covetous mind to professe Religion, that doth not make him righteous, nor change his heart, nor yet his looking into the Scriptures of Truth, and with that Spirit which leadeth out the mind to pride and covetousnesse; read them over, and imagine and think how the Saints in dayes past were separated from the World, and so catcheth up something in his carnal mind, which causeth him to get into some heap of people or other called a Church, and so remaineth still ignorant of that which changeth the heart; for that which changeth the heart, separated them from the World, and gathered them out of it, and caused them to bear a righteous Testimony against the World, by the spirit of grace which appeareth to the World and is the condemnation of all which believeth not in it, and the salvation of all which believeth in it, and profiteth by it, and answereth its requirings by obeying of it, and casting off every weight and burthen which doth so easily beset it, that it may arise, which will be made able through the power of him that rear-

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eth it to run with patience the race of righteousnesse set before it, which race cannot be seen, nor what is to be be cast off known, but as the mind is stayed in the light which maketh all things manifest that is reproveable by it. And therefore all you which love and serveth the unjust power which leadeth the heart and mind to sin, and keeps the just under suffering, under the power of iniquity, in captivity, to your lust, to you---- I say, it seemeth but a small thing to you to blaspheme the light of Christ which shineth in the heart, and maketh all things manifest, which opposeth the seed of God, this you can call natural light, or natural conscience, as often as you please, as the dark power moveth in your minds, because your tongues are your own, but such names the Scriptures never called it by; so your blasphemy will rest upon your own heads, which will be heavy for you to bear when the light must be your condemner and judge; but this I know, if you did not love your evil deeds, and hate the light as the Scripture saith, I am sure you would not so call it, neither could you so blaspheme it. For now consider this, that spiritual wickednesse in the heart which maketh desolate the soul, & standeth where it ought not to stand, cannot be made manifest by a natural light, but that must of necessity be spiritual which maketh manifest spiritual wickednesse, and leadeth out of it, and this is the whole work of the power of darknesse to keep peoples hearts from believing in the light, and to place a prejudice in the mind against it, least it should make him manifest, and the ground in which his power standeth, and so his Kingdom should come to be destroyed, which will be as the light is believed in; and this Testimony I bear for the Lord unto his light against all the blasphemers of it, in the whole world.

And therefore all you which are got into heaps, and call your selves the Church of Christ, and yet can plead against the light of Christ, which leadeth into the

Church of God, which is in Christ Jesus, the Rock of Ages, as he is the light of the World.

Do not you manifest your selves to be gathered and separated onely in words, and by a wrong Spirit, and so by your fruits declare your selves but to be the Synagogue of Satan, begotten by the prince of pride, and father of lies, who hath taught you to blaspheme, to call your selves Saints in saying you are separated from the World, and yet differ in your practise nothing from the World? except it be to exceed them in wickednesse; for to live in sin, and to be able to plead for it, the which many of them are ashamed to do, and so the Publican and Harlot may enter into the kingdom of God before yee. So upon a true search and weighing of you in the true ballance, and measuring of you by a just measure, I cannot finde you to be but the worst of men, and the greatest enemies to the Crosse of Jesus which are this day living, and not wrong you at all; And this Testimony I must needs give of the greatest part of you that ever I met with, that it is the greatest work you find to do, to plead for sin, and for to live in it as long as you live in the body, so you shew what Lord you serve, and whom you are willing to serve as long as you can serve him, and yet you say you hope to be glorified with the Saints in light, and to have an inheritance among them which are sanctified: Is not this the hope of the Hypocrite, and will it not perish? for where will you be sanctified? Not by imputed righteousnesse (as you call it) in your dark minds whilest you live in sin, and sinning against the light and power of him who is the true light and power to destroy and take away sin and the ground of it: And therefore this consider, how you will by your principles escape holding of a Purgatory when you are dead, let the wise in heart which live by faith judge; so of the worst of men in practise, and

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one with the Papiſt in judgement I find you to be, and yet do you no wrong at all in ſo ſaying of you, neither do I write this to upbraid you, God is my witneſſe, but to make manifeſt your ignorance to the view of your underſtanding, that you may ſee you are not ſeparated as you ſay you are from the World, but as the father of lies hath deceived your hearts, and ſo made you a perfect Synagogue for himſelf to dwell in and among, whilſt he ruleth in the heart and guideth your tongues to plead againſt the perfect light of Chriſt Jeſus, the true Saviour of the ſoul from ſinne, and calleth it naturall, and ſo undervalueth it as a thing too low for you to walk by, and as if you had a higher light to walk by, when thouſands can witneſſe to the glory of the Lord and the praiſe of his grace, that the light which you call natural and low leadeth out of ſin and giveth victory over it, whereas that which you call a higher light and ſpiritual, you are forced to confeſs doth not ſo lead you out of ſin, but that it leaveth a root for you to plead for and to remain un-cut up as long as you live; And whether yours be the Lords Axe which cuts up the corrupt tree by the root, let the pure witneſſe of God in your conſciences anſwer? And ſo whether that which you call ſpirital and high, or that which you call natural and low, be the true light of the Lord, which he hath given to be ſalvation to the ends of the earth, let the Children of light judge, which by the Word of life which they have ſeen, taſted and handled of can judge righteous judgement? and ſo ſay in truth, greater is he which is in us, then he which is in the World, to the fulfilling of the Scripture, which ſaith, The ſtrong man armed keepeth the houſe untill the ſtronger then he comes which all the pleaders for ſin are yet ignorant of, ſo are to be ſilent, and to the name of Jeſus to bow, and in the light to wait, until they feel the

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working of that power in them wch bindeth the ſtrong man and ſpoileth his goods, and this is the power of God which ſaveth from ſin, and ſo leadeth the mind and heart by its power to plead againſt all ſin, and to plead for everlaſting righteouſneſſe, and in it to dwell by believing in the light.

And thus I have born my Teſtimony unto the light of the Lord, againſt the darkneſſe of the World, and to the righteouſneſſe of God, againſt the unrighteouſneſſe of the World, and all that plead for it, whether they be gathered together, and call themſelves (though falſly) the Church of Chriſt, or not gathered together, for in the light they are ſeen to be all one, as well now as in the dayes paſt, who have ſtole the name but have loſt the nature, and ſo are dead whilſt they live.

Luke Howard.

AND now all my dear brethren which are redeemed from under the Idol ſhepherds, and gathered out of the falſe wayes and worſhips, (which are many in the World) which are dear and near unto me in the Lord, who hath viſited us with the day-ſpring, or the ſpringing of the day from on high, and by his eternal power in the word of life hath viſited his own plant in us all, to the raiſing up of the priſoner of hope, which can both patiently wait and hope for the Salvation of God. I ſay unto you all, dear friends, in the bowels of everlaſting love and tenderneſſe, and as you tender the glory of our God and your own eternal peace, dwell low in the fear of God, and keep unto that in and by which you have been viſited, and forget it not by any means, but keep to it

that

that you may all be ſenſible in the feeling of a living principle of God, born up in your underſtanding, for to keep your minds alwayes ſtaied on the Lord in the watch that the enemy enter not, ſo will you find the ſeed to grow and the Priſoner of hope to be brought forth, which comes to do the will of him that hath it begotten, and viſited, and by the right hand of his power hath it brought forth, which cannot live out of the preſence of that God of power and life which begot it and brought it forth, and this is the way of Gods ſalvation, wherein it is revealed to all that wait for it. And here all people and profeſſors of all ſorts come and try your hope, If it be not the hope of Gods elect it will not ſtand you in ſtead in the day of the Lord, when he appeareth to give to every man according to his faith, but will prove you to be but the hope of the Hypocrite and that will periſh eternally, And therefore whileſt you have time prize it and conſider from which ſeed your hope riſeth, for that ſeed which can live out of the preſence of God is not Gods elected one, but is that which is curſed eternally, and if that profeſſe and hope, it hopes in vain, for it is reprobated concerniug the faith of Gods elect, and is caſt out of *Abrahams* houſe, or the habitation of the faithful for ever, for it is that which gendereth to bondage, and ſo to death, and endeth therein, and to the liberty or freedom of the ſeed of God it is a ſtranger, for now conſider this that ſeed or ſpirit which can live in pride cannot live in humility, and that which can live in unrighteouſnes cannot live in righteouſneſſe, and that which can live in the ſervice of the Devil cannot live in the ſervice of God, and therefore all you which can live in ſin and unrighteouſneſſe, in death and darkneſs and plead for it, and yet ſay you hope for ſalvation with the Lord, whoſe nature and being is in righteouſneſſe and purity, in the immortal light and glory, (for righteouſneſſe is the girdle of his Loyns.) Are you not deceived by the deceiver and father of lies? who will let you

be Hypocrites and let you leap into a profeſſion and ſteal the name of Saints, and of being called out of the World ſo that he may keep his ſeed alive in you, which cannot live but in tranſgreſſion, and therefore will plead againſt perfect freedom, for by this the Devil knowes that if he can but get men to love ſinne and tranſgreſſion, and to joyn thereto, as to covetouſneſſe, and pride and wantoneſſe, and ſeeking honour one of another, or any unrighteouſnes for to ſerve him in, and yet make a profeſſion too; then ſuch a man is fit to make a Teacher and a Ruler in his Kingdom of darkneſſe, and to plead for it againſt the light, that ſo his work to murder the ſeed of God which is begotten in the light may go the more ſtronger on in the myſterie of iniquity, for if the ſerpents ſeed in *Cain* which can imbrace this preſent World, ſhould offer a Sacrifice, is it not from that ground which is curſed, and is it not an abomination to the Lord as his murder is? For if that ſeed or nature offer a ſacrifice, or if it ſlay a man, is it not all one as to the Lord? yea aſſuredly, although by its ſacrificing and profeſſion it would ſeek to cover its ſin and the ground from whence it proceedeth wherein its life lyeth which is nouriſhed and kept alive by the duſt threof; which is all curſed for its ſake, he that readeth let him underſtand.

And therefore all people upon the face of the earth unto whom theſe lines may come, this is that I have to ſay unto you all in love unto the ſeed of God in you all, the Lord is my witneſſe I lie not I ſay this unto you all, If you will have eternal peace with your Maker, bow down to that which may be known of God the light of Jeſus Chriſt which is eternal, which is made manifeſt in you, and is daily ſhewen unto you, which light is the grace of God which appeareth unto you, and checketh you in ſecret when no eye ſeeth you, and diſcoverteh the thoughts and intents of your hearts unto you before they are brought forth into evil actions, the which if you receive

ceive it, I am a witneſſe for the Lord in this the day of his power, that it will teach you to deny all ungodlineſſe, or that which is not like God which it reproves, and brings you into the image of God, or likeneſſe, which is righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe which it juſtifies, but if you rebell againſt it, aſſuredly it will eternally condemn you from his preſence, although you may ſay in your hearts you hope it will not, for now the grace of God is the light of Chriſt Jeſus which ſheweth to man ſin and unrighteouſneſſe, for this end that all might be led out of it and to bring in everſtaing righteouſneſſe, that the ſpirit thereof might rule and have the government upon his ſhoulders alone, whoſe habitation is onely in the light, and therefore if that ſpirit work in the mind and rule in the heart whoſe life is in darkneſſe and out of the bounds of the heart, bringing forth the deeds of darkneſſe, and yet ſay, you have hope in God which is light and in him is no darkneſſe at all; is not this the hope of the Hypocrite to think you may live in *Dives* his nature all your life time, and yet have *Lazarus* his poſſeſſion, when you can no longer live therein? For this conſider wherefore you were created, but to glorifie your Creator in your ſpirits, and in and with your bodies which is but your reaſonable ſervice, and to live unto God in all things, and not unto your ſelves, and therefore be ſtill and conſider and let the witneſſe of God in all conciences anſwer before it be too late and there be no remedy, And if you ſow to the fleſh, how can you think you can reap the fruits of the ſpirit? and if you ſow to your luſt, how can you think you ſhall reap the fruits of chaſtity? and if you ſow to the ſpirit of pride, can you hope to reap the fruits of humility? and if you ſow to the ſpirit of this world, whoſe life is in the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life, and covetouſneſſe, and all things which are not of God, and how can you ſay or think it poſſible you ſhould reap the fruits of the Spirit of God by which he calleth and all the day long ſtretcheth

out his hand by it? that so he might have the heart, it to guide and rule to the bringing forth fruit to him and not to your selves, for herein is our heavenly Father glorified when fruit to his spirit is brought forth, and all herein are approved of with the Lord, and all such condemned already which believeth not in him which giveth the victory over the spirit of this World, which spirit cannot live if it be not fed with the fruit thereof, and therefore consider he which liveth in pleasure is dead whilst he lives, and he which liveth wantonly on the earth crucifieth the just, and he which is covetous is an Idolatour, and all such are shut out of the Kingdom of God, which the Spirit of Jesus the true light leadeth unto, and are amongst the dogs and swine in the devouring nature ready to quarrel both in words and actions, about the words and things of God, which are not theirs; and here may all Hypocrites read their portion, who can make a profession and plead for it, and with the same mind, and by the same spirit plead and quarrel against the Saints, and against the perfect righteousnesse of God to be injoyed in this life, and so opposeth the command of God, and the gift of God, and the work of God by Jesus Christ, which is to purchase unto himself a Church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, and so maketh as much as in them lies the Word of God of none effect by their own imaginations, which word is near in the heart, and in the mouth, and as it is believed in, it is ingrafted in the heart, and it is able to save the soul from sin and that is its effect to all which believe in it; for the Word of God is the life of God, and the life of God is the light of men, and the light of men is Jesus, the Savieur of all which believe in him, and his Name is called the Word of God, the entrance whereof giveth life, and he hath so appeared in this the day of his power, to be the word of life from the dead, a quickning spirit to many faithfull and true Witnesses of his resurrection and his life, even him who was dead and is alive, and behold he liveth for ever more

(even

everlasting praises be unto him, and glory for ever; and he will so appear unto all which wait for him, and ask the way to *Zion* with their faces thither-ward, and backs set to *Ægypts* Land never there to return again, but now here is a great talk at this day of *Zion* and the way there, and some presume to be Leaders to her, and builders of her waste places again, which the wild bore of the forest hath layed waste, but where among them all are they to be found, whose faces are set to *Zion*, and their backs to *Ægypt*, for the chief corner stone hath been and is neglected by them all, even that on which all the building should stand, Christ Jesus the light of the World and Rock of Ages; and so although they have and may talk of the way to *Zion*, and of building up of her walls, yet their faces have been and now are much more then in the days past set to *Ægypts* land of darkness and bondage wherein our Lord was and is Crucified; for now consider honestly this thing, whilst a man asketh the way to *Zion* that is to say, the place of Gods habitation, which the Lord hath chosen for his rest, and yet his face set to *Egypt* that is to say the place of the Devils habitation, with his mind and heart in pride and covetousness, or after any thing which is not of God, he is not like to come to *Zion*, although he may talk of it in words, but it stands not in words, for the King and Law giver thereof his appearance is and will be dreadful to all such, the workers of iniquity, for the proud and all which do wickedly shall be unto him as stubble is unto the fire; and therefore this know plainly, that if you ask the way to *Zion* aright, your faces must be thither-ward, and your backs full set to *Ægypt*, that is to say, your minds and hearts set against all the deeds of darkness, which as you love the light, and so bring all your deeds unto it, you will come to see and feell the power of the Lord, you to lead out of the land of darkness, into his mervellous light, for the gift of God, the light which shineth in the heart it shineth for this very end and purpose, to give the light

of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, Gods salvation from sin, which is so made unto all which believe in him, as he is the true light of the World, and the wisdom of God, and the power of God to keep in the daily crosse, which the wise builders have and do leave behind as a thing too low and mean for them to build in, and therefore have been and are ashamed of it: but to us it is the mighty power of God unto Salvation, by which we are crucified unto the World, and the World unto us, so that we can say with the Saints which are gone before (everlastlasting praises be unto our God for ever) that we are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the mighty power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth; for the Gospel is the power, and the Crosse is the power, and hereon and herein we build that which the gates of Hell and death cannot destroy, because it is founded on the Rock of Ages, Christ Jesus the light of the World, he that hath an ear to hear let him hear, and he that readeth let him understand, and he which can receive it let him.

And thus in plain words have I born my testimony unto the World as a witnesse against all the foolish builders and deceivers, and blind guides, which therein live, and this of them I have to say yet not I but the Lord, that of all men in the World their condition is the most miserable, because there is very few of them, if any, which doth not sin against their knowledge, and so are desperate Hypocrites for pieces of bread, and handfuls of barley, to maintain themselves, their Wives and Children in pride and idleneſſe, and so murder in their way by consent, to the fulfilling of the Scriptures to their own destruction. And this is my Testimony to all men in righteousneſſe for my God through Jesus Christ my Saviour, my righteousneſſe, wisdom, sanctification and redemption, God over all, hell and death, blessed for ever.

Luke Howard.

THE END.